Orchard Lea Federation School Equality Policy and Objectives

Date agreed: May 2023

Date for review: May 2027

Introduction

We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 as both a provider of education and as an employer.

We believe that all pupils and members of staff should have the opportunity to fulfil their potential whatever their background, identity and circumstances. We are committed to creating a community that recognises and celebrates difference within a culture of respect and cooperation. We appreciate that a culture, which promotes equality, will create a positive environment and a shared sense of belonging for all who work, learn and use the services of our school. We recognise that equality will only be achieved by the whole school community working together – our pupils, staff, governors and parents/carers.

This document outlines the principles, which will guide our approach to working with our school community and enabling an open culture.

For staff and prospective staff, this policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Employment Equality Policy and other key polices. Key policies can be found on our website.

National and Legal Context

We recognise that we have duties under the Equality Act 2010 in relation to the school community to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (applicable only to staff), disability, gender reassignment (applicable only to staff), race, sex, maternity and pregnancy, religion or belief, sexual orientation and marriage and civil partnership (applicable only to staff).

We also recognise that we have a duty under the Education & Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion, i.e. developing good relations across different cultures and groups.

We also appreciate that these duties reflect the international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

School Context

As a school, the majority of our families are White British. A typical pupil is enthusiastic, ready to learn and ready to be taught about difference.

Infant School

Our percentage of pupils who are SEN, disadvantaged or have English as an additional language is below the national average. We have families who practise different faiths such as Christianity, Hinduism and Islam.

We have an equal amount of male to female pupils. Recently, we have noticed an increase in the number of pupils entering the school requiring an EHCP. We have an increasing number of children who are lower attainers.

Junior School

Our percentage of pupils who are SEN, disadvantaged or have English as an additional language is below the national average. We have families who practise different faiths such as Christianity, Hinduism and Islam. We have seen a small increase in the number of practising Muslims joining our school over the past few years.

In both schools we have an equal amount of male to female pupils. Recently, we have noticed an increase in the number of pupils entering the school requiring an EHCP.

Principles

To fulfil our legal obligations, we are guided by a number of principles.

1. All pupils, families and staff are of equal value

We see all pupils, potential pupils, their parents and carers, and staff as of equal value:

- Whether or not they are disabled
- Whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status
- Whatever their sex

- Whether they have had a gender reassignment.
- Whatever their religious and non-religious affiliation or faith background
- Whatever their sexual orientation
- Whatever their marital status
- Whether they are currently pregnant or have recently given birth
- Whatever their age

2. We recognise and respect difference

We recognise that treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. We recognise that our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must take account of diversity and the kinds of barriers and disadvantage that staff, parents/carers or pupils may face in relation to their protected characteristics:

- Disability – we understand that reasonable adjustments may need to be made.
- Sex – we recognise that girls and boys, men and women have different needs.
- Gender reassignment – we recognise an individual has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment if they are proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning their sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex.
- Religion and belief – we acknowledge that reasonable requests in relation to religious observance and practice may need to be made and complied with.
- Ethnicity and race – we appreciate that all have different experiences as a result of our ethnic and racial backgrounds.
- Age – we value the diversity in age of staff, parents and carers.
- Sexual orientation – we respect that individuals have the right to determine their own sexual identity and that they should not experience disadvantage as a result of their preference.
- Marriage and civil partnership – we recognise that our staff, parents and carers may make their own personal choices in respect of personal relationships and that they should not experience disadvantage as a result of the relationships they have.
- Pregnancy and maternity – we believe that our staff, parents and carers should not experience any unfair disadvantage as a result of pregnancy or having recently given birth.

3. We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- positive attitudes and interaction between groups and communities different from each other
- an absence of harassment, victimisation and discrimination in relation to any protected characteristics

4. We observe good equalities practice in relation to staff

We ensure that our policies and practices for all staff and potential staff throughout the employment lifecycle, i.e. from recruitment through to the cessation of employment and beyond, are applied fairly and consistently across all groups with full respect for legal rights, taking into account aspects applicable to particular groups (e.g. duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled staff).

5. We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities avoid or minimise any possible negative impacts and we aim to reduce inequalities that exist between groups and communities different from each other.

6. We consult and involve to ensure views are heard

In our development of policies, we engage with groups and individuals, including pupils who are affected by a policy or activity to ensure that their views are taken into account. For policies and activities affecting pupils, we will take account of views expressed at pupil council meetings, through discussions in class and through pupil conferencing; for parents, through parent governor representation, meetings and surveys, and for staff, through staff governor representation. Where necessary, we will consult more widely with specific groups.

7. We aim to foster greater community cohesion

We intend that our policies, activities and curriculum offer foster greater social cohesion and provide for an equal opportunity to participate in public life irrespective of the protected characteristics of individuals and groups.

8. We base our practices on sound evidence

We maintain and publish information annually to show our compliance with the public sector equality duty, set out under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

As we have less than 150 staff, we are not required to publish information in relation to our staff, and therefore are only required to publish pupil-related data.

9. We set ourselves specific and measurable equality objectives

We develop and publish specific and measurable objectives every four years based on the evidence that we have gathered (principle 8) and the engagement we have been involved in (principle 7).

The objectives can be found in Appendix A to this policy statement and take into account both national, county and school level priorities.

We will set ourselves new objectives every four years, but keep them under review and report to the Governing body annually on progress towards achieving them.

Application of the principles within this policy statement:

The principles outlined in the policy statement will be applied and reflected in:

- The delivery of the school curriculum especially our PSHE units of work
- The teaching and learning within the school
- Our practice in relation to pupil progress, attainment and achievement
- Our teaching styles and strategies
- Our policies and practice in relation to admissions and attendance
- Our policies and practice in relation to staff
- Our care, guidance and support to pupils, their families and staff
- Our policies and practice in relation to pupil behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- Our partnership working with parents and carers
- Our contact with the wider school community

Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying

The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice including, but not limited to prejudice related to protected characteristics. We will ensure that prejudice-related incidents in relation to staff and pupils are recorded and dealt with appropriately.

We recognise that some groups of pupils are more vulnerable to abuse and we have clear safeguarding procedures in school that we follow to ensure that all our pupils feel safe in school.

Roles and responsibilities

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented and that arrangements are in place to deal with any concerns or unlawful action that arises.

The Executive Headteacher is responsible for implementation of this policy, ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and given appropriate training and support and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

All staff are expected to work in accordance with the principles outlined in this policy to:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their practice
- deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- plan and deliver the curriculum and lessons
- support pupils in their class who have additional needs

Qualitative information

The school has published various policies on the school's internet site. These policies evidence the school's commitment to the principles outlined in this policy and the public sector equality duty. For further information, you are welcome to come into school and speak with the Executive Headteacher and/or the Head of School(s).

Complaints

If you wish to make a complaint regarding the implementation of this policy, then we suggest that an appointment is made to speak to the Executive Headteacher and/or the Head of School(s) in the first instance. If you still remain dissatisfied, then we have a further complaints policy, which can be found on our website.

Equality Objectives **Appendix A**

We recognise that the public sector equality duty has three aims, to:

- *eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct under the Act*
- *advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not*
- *foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not*

We have considered how well we currently achieve these aims with regard to the protected groups under the Equality Act (race, disability, sex, gender re-assignment, age, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, religion or belief and sexual orientation).

We have also involved members of the school community in the following ways:

- parent survey
- pupil conferencing
- analysis of data such as representation at clubs, on the school council and number of awards given out.
- Analysis of data such as phonics, end of KS1 data and end of KS2 data.

Having referred to and analysed our equality information, we have set ourselves the following objectives:

Objective 1: To ensure that girls and all SEN children are able to fully participate in all sports and after school activities.

Rationale: It has been recognised that girls/SEN children are not choosing to participate in school clubs held during the day as well as after school. They are not choosing to play outside sports at playtime. It is important for girls' mental and physical wellbeing to be engaged in physical activities.

Attendance at sports clubs: 26% attendance by girls, 6.5% attendance by SEN and 10% attendance by PP.

Non-sports clubs: 75% girls attendance, 6.2% attendance by SEN and 0% attendance by PP.

Actions to be taken:

- Research into "Make spaces for girls" initiative. This is teenage based but the principles could help us with this objective.
- Provide more ways for girls to access sport in a non-threatening environment: girls' only clubs, clubs run by female staff.
- Discuss with girls which sports clubs they would enjoy.
- Encourage parents/cares to sign their girls up for sports clubs through the sharing of information in Newsletters.
- Encourage girl sports champions in Year 2.
- Invite female sports personalities into school.
- Work alongside the Pupil councillors to develop female sport's presence within school.
- Research and act upon reasons for non-attendance at non-sports club by PP.

Objective 2: To embed consistent procedures in the school so that pupils from different religions and home school backgrounds are fully supported and all made to feel included and welcomed in our school.

Rationale: We are very much a white British community at Orchard Lea Federation with only a very small percentage of children and families from other faiths/backgrounds. We would like to make our school feel more inclusive for all members of our community regardless of their faith, disability or background.

Actions we would like to take:

- Train staff to have a deeper understanding of the protected characteristics.
- Staff, pupil and parental training in the "No outsiders" approach.
- Ensure that all staff are trained on the key principles, practises and beliefs in Christianity, Islam and Hinduism.

- Ensure that the school works with pupils to support them to practise their religion comfortably within the school day.
- Ensure that all staff understand the key systems we have in school to support pupils.
- Work with parents to ensure that they feel supported and included, listening to feedback where needed.
- Utilise areas around the school more effectively so that pupils feel comfortable and supported.
- Ensure careful timetabling and communication to parents regarding key events so that adjustments can be made to support and include pupils.
- Children to be regularly reminded of the Orchard Lea Way of “Ready, Respectful, Safe.”

Objective 3: To teach children about their wider community.

- Plan lessons, which reflect our community using a diverse range of texts.
- Invite speakers and visitors into school from our community from different sectors of the community.
- Children to become more involved in the local community with initiatives like the Food revolution bank.
- Develop our relationship with older members of the community though the School readers project.

In addition to the objectives above, we have identified that as a school we need to refresh training regarding equalities and aim to ensure this happens by the end of the academic year 2023-4.